Uniting for Peace

Reg. No. B3092

HARIJAN

(FOUNDED BY MAHATMA GANDHI)

Editor: K. G. MASHRUWALA

VOL. XIII. No. 43 AHMEDABAD — SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25, 1949 TWO ANNAS

PEACE AND STRIFE

The Fundamental Things

I do not know exactly what questions will receive particular attention at the World Pacifist Meeting. A detailed questionnaire was drawn up by the Secretaries, and it touched a variety of subjects — Religion, Education, Science, Industry, Commerce, Government, etc. Each aspect of life has to be examined from the standpoint of creating a world of peace and non-violence. Each of these has been availed of by man both for fostering the spirit of love, peace and benevolence, and for encouraging dissensions, hatred and vice, carrying fire and sword, and inflicting misery and pain on human and animal life.

All these various topics are but superficial branches of life. The fundamental thing is man's heart and his immediate surroundings — his family and neighbourhood and its capacity to spread itself in the universe. If I am capable of quarrelling with my father or son or wife or brother or neighbour, or of torturing a dumb animal, of being selfish in my relations with any of them, or of harbouring the memory of an unfair act, or a harsh word by any of them to me, or of regarding none but those who belong to the small group familiar to me as entitled to my love, regard and service, there is little chance of peace and goodwill reigning in the world.

It is often said that the appearance of a single sparrow is not the spring; but it does indicate the beginning of a change in the season, and leads one to expect that within a fortnight or more, more sparrows will arrive, and so also the spring. Similarly, a few honest souls who have led their lives in tune with the Infinite, may not be sufficient to change the course of the world, but they create the hope that with persistent and diligent effort, mankind can attain that stage. Anyhow, those who have been convinced of it and called to it cannot do anything else. Whether they receive worship and honour or abuse, insult and persecution from all sides, theirs is to live by and work for their creed and to believe with Gandhiji that if non-violence has failed to succeed yet, it is not because non-violence is an insufficient power, but that we, through whom that power has to work, are not efficient vehicles for its manifestation. And so, whether we work in the public and propagate our thoughts in the people or lead a private and unadvertised life, every activity of ours must be diverted as much towards our own steady moral improvement as of our neighbours. The first result of our efforts we must seek upon our own life. We cannot establish peace outside unless we are at peace with ourselves and spread love and peace in our immediate surroundings.

Problems of War and Peace

So many things come to one's mind, as one thinks of the problems of war and peace. How is it that Philosophy and Religion, claiming to be quest and message of God, History and Education, supposed to be quest and message of culture, Science and Industry, regarded as quest and application of nature's forces, Commerce and Government, devised for the purpose of enhancing prosperity and just order — in fact, every human activity meant for the good of man and the world has become an instrument of evil? Which is the compass which he has lost or damaged, so that he is unable to find the right direction, and journeys fruitlessly in the wide ocean and frequently dashes against hidden rocks?

No one says that he wants war. Hitler and Mussolini did not want it for its own sake. Stalin, Roosevelt and Churchill did not want it, Truman and Attlee do not want it; India and Pakistan do not want it, nor Kashmir. Ordinary people all over the world do not want it. Every one is a pacifist in that sense. And still there are wars, and mass killings and other kinds of destruction in the wake of them. Why is it so?

The thing is that no one wants war and certainly, not to take the offensive if only one condition is fulfilled. Namely, he is allowed to have his own way in respect of life, property, and activities and *others* adjust themselves to *his* convenience. If there is a hindrance there, he has to "defend" himself; for, to have his own way he regards his birthright. And since taking the offensive is the best defence, he wants to keep himself better prepared militarily than others. Thus every one points to the other and says, "What can I help? The *other one* does not believe in peaceful methods. *He* will not allow me to go my own way, and adjust *himself* accordingly. And I have no course left but to put him out of my way".

Or if I say to my neighbour, "If you are good and kind to me and do not stand in my way or act unfairly towards me, I extend my hand of friendship to you and say to you *salaam* — peace be with you. But if you are not so good, but are selfish and unreasonable, I shall fight you," then my pacifism is of doubtful quality. If Peace is to succeed and be supreme in human affairs, I must be prepared to take the risk of being unjustly treated by my neighbour, and seek some way other than one of violent action to resist his injustice. With all our expensive and elaborate military preparations, war is a risky job and uncertain about the result. Even victory becomes a defeat. And yet every one believes in war methods unconditionally, but will adopt peaceful methods only if the other will do so. This cannot bring peace among nations any more than it can among neighbours. Some one has to take the initiative unilaterally with the risk of being run over and crushed down completely by another power. He has to do so on the strength of the Spirit and the inherent truth and justness of his own stand.

But rulers with a sense of responsibility to their countrymen can hardly be expected to show such courage. People would throw them out if they tried to. Rulers with imperialistic and exploitary ambitions can have it still less.

How may then this problem be solved ? How much may rulers be expected and prevailed upon to undertake by the pressure of public opinion ? And how may reasoned public opinion be organized and strengthened on this subject ?

Wardha, 24-11-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

AHIMSA IN SINO-INDIAN CULTURE

III

Mahavira and Buddha

The foregoing paragraphs have dealt at sufficient length with the ideals and messages of the Chinese saints and sages. Now turn to India again.

In India, Mahavira Jaina and Sakyamuni Buddha preached almost the same gospel in the same way. The fundamental principles and teachings of both of them, such as the *pancha silani* or the five rules are nearly the same. Those of Buddha are : First, non-killing ; second, non-stealing ; third, non-adultery ; fourth, non-lying ; and the fifth, non-drinking. And those of Jaina are : First, speaking-the-truth ; second, living-a-pure-and-poor-life ; third, non-killing ; fourth, non-stealing ; and fifth, observing-chastity.

The Three Jewels (*triratna*) of Jaina, namely, (1) *samyag-darsana*, right conviction, faith and perception combined ; (2) *samyag-jnana*, right knowledge ; (3) *samyag-charitra*, right conduct ; are all included in the Eightfold Noble Path (*aryamarga*) of Buddha, namely : (1) *samyagdristi*, right views ; (2) *samyag-samkalpa*, right thought; (3) *samyag-vac*, right speech; (4) *samyag-karmanta*, right conduct ; (5) *samyag-ajiva*, right livelihood ; (6) *samyag-vyayama*, right effort ; (7) *samyag-smriti*, right remembrance ; and (8) *samyag-samadhi*, right meditation. Both these sets of items are right ways leading to the same goal, *Nirvana*.

Besides, both, Mahavira Jaina and Sakyamuni Buddha, believed in the doctrine of *karma* and *samsara*. They both denied the omnipotent and omniscient God ; and believed that only one's own zeal and effort could work out one's own salvation.

The similarity between the two religions, Jainism and Buddhism, is so great that some Western savants mistook them for one and the same. The real facts are that from the religious point of view they are indeed very similar to each other, but from the metaphysical point of view they are quite different.

But the most striking feature of the two religions is the same teaching, the same gospel of *ahimsa* in both its positive and negative senses ; in its negative sense of "absolute and perfect harmlessness towards all living beings", and its positive sense of "absolute and eternal happiness for all living beings".

Gandhiji

As Love is the indissoluble partner of *ahimsa* as stated before, Truth is another inseparable companion of *ahimsa*. As Gandhiji once said :

> "*Ahimsa* and Truth are so intertwined that it is practically impossible to disentangle and separate them. They are like the two sides of a coin, or rather a smooth unstamped metallic disc. Who can say, which is the obverse and which the reverse? " (*From Yeravda Mandir*, 13).

Ahimsa, Love, Truth are the Trinity of One which we may call the Supreme, or God, or Heaven, or *Brahma*, or any other name we like. In carrying out their mission this Trinity have again a number of allies or comrades such as Charity, Sacrifice, Selflessness, Fearlessness, Forgiveness, etc. Thus Gandhiji said :

> "In its positive form, *ahimsa* means the largest love, greatest charity. If I am a follower of *ahimsa*, I must love my enemy. I must apply the same rules to the wrong-doer who is my enemy or a stranger to me, as I would to my wrong-doing father or son. This active *ahimsa* necessarily includes truth and fearlessness." (*Speeches and Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*, 346).

> "*Ahimsa* is the extreme limit of forgiveness. But forgiveness is the quality of the brave. *Ahimsa* is impossible without fearlessness."

> "Let us now examine the root of *ahimsa*. It is uttermost selflessness. Selflessness means complete freedom from a regard for one's body. If man desired to realize himself, i.e. Truth, he could do so only by being completely detached from the body, i.e. by making all other beings feel safe from him. That is the way of *ahimsa*." (*Young India*, 4-11-'26, 384-385).

India-China-Christ

Now, what is the truth of *ahimsa*? The Truth is this. All living beings in the world have the same life and the same soul. They belong to the same Mother, come from the same origin and will return to the same home. It is like a tree of which the stem, branches, leaves, flowers and fruits all come into being from one and the same root. It is also like an ocean, of which all individual beings are but its separate drops. We therefore belong to all, and all belong to us. Thus the Chinese sages said:

> "Heaven, Earth and I were born at the same time; and all beings are one and the same with me." (Chuan-Tsu: *Tsi-Wu-Lun*).
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> "All things are one" and "Love all beings; Heaven and Earth are one and the body." (Hui-Tsu quoted by Chuan-Tsu).
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> "All things are already complete in me." (Mencius: *Book of Mencius*).
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> "All people are my brethren and all things are my fellows." (Chang-Tsai: *Si-Ming*).

As such, we therefore should love not only all people but all living beings. We must treat all of them as ourselves and must not hurt any of them causing them pain, just as we would not like any of them to hurt us causing us pain, following the golden rule in the great Epics taught by the ancient Indian sages: "Do naught to others which if done to thee, would cause thee pain." Jesus Christ and Confucius also gave us exactly the same message. Jesus Christ said in His Sermon on the Mount: "Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them." Confucius said in answering to a question as to "What is the most simple way one may follow for his whole lifetime?", put by his disciple: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

Lord Mahavira illustrated this message in an even more lucid way in the following passages:

> "The man also, who still lives in the house, should, in accordance with his creed, be merciful to all living beings; we are bidden to be fair and equal with all."
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> "Towards your fellow-creatures be not hostile; that is the law of His who is rich in control."
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> "All beings hate pain; therefore one should not kill them."
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> "A man who insults another will long whirl in the cycle of births; to blame others is not good."
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> A cruel man does cruel acts and is thereby involved in other cruelties; but sinful undertakings will in the end bring about misery." (*Sutra Kratanga*: S. B. E. Series).
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> "In happiness and suffering, in joy and grief, we should regard all creatures as we regard our own self, and should therefore refrain from inflicting upon others, such injury as would appear undesirable to us, if inflicted upon ourselves." (*Yogashastra*).
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This is the reason why most Hindus, especially the Jains and the Buddhists, would refrain from taking any flesh for their food. The Jains would even refrain from taking fresh vegetables, because they are living, and to hurt any living thing is in Jainism a deadly sin. They go even so far as to drink only boiled water or even breathe with a cloth across their mouth to avoid insects and unseen *jivas* inhabiting the air. They would also sweep their path lest they may tread on insects. According to them, under the law of *ahimsa*, killing of vermin is also forbidden, so that asylums have been established for decrepit animals rather than that they should be put out of their misery by the destruction of life.

People may think that the way which the Jains preach and follow is rather impracticable and therefore unreasonable. This is a wrong notion. It may be impracticable but is not absolutely unreasonable. It is impracticable because humanity has not yet progressed enough. When humanity has sufficiently developed and reached a certain higher stage, this law of *ahimsa* should be and would be followed by all.

From what has been said above we can have an outline of the spirit of *ahimsa* in Sino-Indian Culture. The facts related and the passages quoted are only those which came readily to my mind and were easily available. Similar facts and passages of the same kind are too numerous in Chinese and Indian literatures and scriptures to be quoted in full. It is even difficult to make the best adequate selection of them. These facts and passages were not merely religious ideals or ethical principles but actual and real events in history. Looking over the histories of India and China, from the very beginning to the present day, these two countries have never attacked or invaded any other country, never exploited any other people, though they have often been attacked, invaded and exploited by other warlike peoples. But those who invaded India and China were often assimilated and absorbed by Indian and Chinese cultures, and have enjoyed with the Indian and Chinese peoples their national wealth and harmony of life.

It has been therefore my firm belief, and also my humble submission, that we Chinese and Indians, the two greatest peoples of the world, should culturally join together and mingle together to create, to establish and to promote a common culture, called Sino-Indian Culture, entirely based on *ahimsa*. By creating, establishing and promoting this common Sino-Indian Culture, we shall further create, establish and promote a common World Culture on the same basis. By creating, establishing and promoting a common World Culture, we shall create and establish a great union of the world. And by creating and establishing a great union of the world, we shall lead the world to real and permanent peace, love, harmony and happiness.

TAN YUN-SHAN

HARIJAN

December 25 1949

UNITING FOR PEACE

The World Pacifist Meeting meets again during the Christmas Week at Sevagram after (judging from the notes of its proceedings at Santiniketan) a week of serious thinking. The members gather together on the Christmas Eve and under the shadow of Gandhiji's own cottage, and will, therefore, be naturally reminded of that great Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ, as well as the greatest modern implementer of his message, Mahatma Gandhi. Behind them both stands the tranquil image of Buddha. It may interest foreign friends to know that it was at Sevagram and in Gandhiji's own cottage that Shri Dharmananda Kosambi breathed his last sometime before Gandhiji's demise. It was due to the popular writings of Shri Dharmananda Kosambi that Buddha's Life and Teachings became available to the people of Maharashtra and Gujarat, and that somewhat neglected master reappeared before the people of his own country, almost like a new messenger.

Shri Dharmananda Kosambi had attained fame as a scholar of Pali and had worked for several years in the academies of U. S. A. as well as U. S. S. R. as an Orientalist. The most recent political trends seem to indicate that the philosophies of life of U. S. A. and U. S. S. R. are diametrically opposite and irreconcilable. Shri Kosambi found several lovable things in both and loved the people of both the countries equally.

Shri Kosambi's own career and character and the way in which he lived and calmly laid down his life through a fast unto death were exemplary in themselves. A perfectly patriotic Indian taking the fullest interest in the emancipation of this country, his patriotism did not stand in the way of loving Americans, Englishmen, or Russians, and to make himself perfectly at home among all peoples. He had also lived in Ceylon, Nepal and Burma in Buddhist temples, learning at the feet of Buddhist monks of various countries. He became a convert to Buddhism, but he did not identify himself with any Buddhist sect or church, and did not lose interest in the religious lore of his own Brahman ancestors, from *Vedic* times to the modern Maharashtra Saint Tukaram. He found kinship between Buddha and Tukaram.

Not that he had not his own likes and dislikes, prepossessions and prejudices. He could not brook, in particular, deliberate hypocrisy and lies in the name of religion and religious interpretation, whether perpetrated by Hindus, Buddhists or any one else. But this is an essential quality in a seeker of Truth, though the way of protesting against untruth might vary in every individual according to his discipline and temperament.

I am reminded of Shri Kosambi on this occasion not because of the accident of his death at Sevagram, but because he was an example of a Citizen of the World. He could have said without reserve that he was simultaneously a citizen of U. S. A., Russia, Burma, Ceylon, Nepal and, of course, India. By the by, by birth he was, I think, a subject of Portugese India. He felt that, provided political fanatics of every country and sect could be controlled, the people of U. S. A., England and Russia or of India and Pakistan, could be made to live and work together for the good of all. This is a great principle, which must be borne in mind by every worker in the cause of Peace. Indeed, is it not strange that U. S. A., England, and U. S. S. R. could unite together for winning the war, but cannot do so for maintaining peace ? There is something incongruous in this, which should be sought out and removed.

Wardha, 16-12-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

PRECIOUS METALS AND STONES

"It is not in the fitness of things for Government servants to be presented by the public with addresses of welcome enclosed in expensive caskets, particularly gold or silver," said the Prime Minister, Pandit Nehru, in a statement from New Delhi, on November 23rd.

"It has long been the custom for public and sometimes private organizations to make presentations of addresses of welcome to persons they seek to honour. These addresses are enclosed in caskets of varying value. Sometimes the caskets are of silver, sometimes even gold. I have repeatedly urged that such addresses of welcome should not be placed in expensive caskets. In particular, gold and silver should be avoided, as well as, of course, any form of jewels or precious stones. Beauty and artistic excellence do not depend upon expensive metals and stones.

"Mahatma Gandhi was against the practice of giving expensive caskets. At any time, this is to be avoided, but, more specially, at the present moment, when there is the utmost need for economy, such extravagance is not only uncalled for, but rather improper.

"I should also like to add that the practice of presenting such caskets by public organizations embarrasses Government servants and is not a suitable procedure to follow.

"I trust that Provincial Governments and Ministers will be good enough to follow the advice indicated above and to advise their officers accordingly."

— P. T. I.

This is wholesome so far as it goes. I do not know why the rule should not be made obligatory upon all holders of public office.

But it raises a moot question : What is the proper place of precious metals like gold and silver and stones like diamonds and rubies in life ? Silver is somewhat used in everyday life in the shape of utensils, ornaments, etc. It is also used (though less so nowadays) for coins. So it is subjected to some wear and tear and risk of being lost in daily use like any other article of consumption. Gold is less so. A few articles

of gold are used by upper middle and wealthy classes in their daily life in the shape of ornaments, watches, etc. As coins it has become almost rare. Generally it has to be kept carefully concealed and taken out for display only on festive occasions. A little can be used for medicines, which is perhaps the only complete and irrecoverable consumption of the metal. Pearls and valuable stones like diamonds, rubies, etc. are of even less ordinary and effective use than gold. They are recovered from deep mines and seas and have to be generally consigned to the depths of strong vaults and can be used only for display under proper safeguards. A very small number of very inferior type and size may be used in delicate machinery like watches, etc.

Nevertheless these lustrous objects have attracted man from times immemorial and he has always liked to invest his savings in purchasing them. They have also provided an interesting field for man to develop his artistic faculties. An additional reason for their preference is that they do not rust and get worn by inclement weather or by being buried in earth. And so, though they do not fetch any interest or regular income and are dead capital commercially, even the most business-minded industrialist goes in for these things to a degree proportionate to his income. Indeed, they are a sort of barometer of his wealth. And though he might ridicule the *kisan* for investing his savings in silver (and gold) ornaments, instead of in his companies and banks, he himself is not altogether innocent of that tendency. Indeed, he also thinks that in a period of crisis, these metals and stones might enable him to get cash and save him from penury and so, to a certain extent, they are better than stocks, shares, promissory notes and even lands and houses. They are even better than insurance policies. He can run away to another country more safely with these than with other forms of property.

It is for this reason that eventually these substances which have little food or other necessity value are still regarded most valuable possessions, and ultimately get into the hands of those very countries and people who are most commercially minded. Thus for several centuries, India was a leader in trade and was also the greatest store-house of jewels. When Britain controlled the destiny of India and also excelled all others in trade, she took good care to see that India's gold and silver reserves were kept in England and not here. U. S. A., I believe, is the greatest store-house of gold (and silver ?) now. The best place of preserving them are State (and to a limited extent, private) treasuries, with occasional display for the benefit of the public on the persons of idols, kings, dignitaries, businessmen, ladies, bridegrooms and dandies.

Thus these metals and stones are a part of reserved capital or better still, " cash in hand ". They bear no interest and can be made use of only by changing them into currency of a smaller denomination. They are like currency notes or cheques of large amounts.

But as articles of consumption, they have a display value, and to a large extent only that. Display is childish, if not foolish, but the fondness for it sticks on to man, for few men, if at all, entirely cease to be children, whatever their age. Even priests, *sadhus* and *gurus* love to put them on. So, since these things must stay in the world, and have a value on account of their keeping qualities, men should be allowed to handle them at times for the gratification of their own vanity and for providing feast to the eyes of spectators fond of them.

The State should be their central storehouse, and as a single repository the largest one. That does not mean that the amount of these metals and stones possessed by the State should be larger than the total amount possessed by the people. So they should be judiciously distributed among the people through sale. But their constant return to the State should always be encouraged.

Consequently, if it pleases people's sense of appreciation, esteem, art and, if you like, vanity in presenting valuable caskets and jewellery to officers of State — whether in regular services or elective posts — that sense may be allowed to be gratified on condition that all these presents immediately become State property. Government might either immediately auction them or sell them by and by to the people in the very form in which they have been presented or in a converted form, or melt them into bullion or keep them for display in museums or on certain occasions, as it might deem best. What should not be allowed is the claim of the recipient to a personal and proprietary interest in the presents. Just as the present of a purse to a public servant has been now recognized as conferring no personal ownership on the recipient, so too should be the presentation of jewellery. If the present is made to a public worker, outside Government, it should be converted into money and the money treated in the same way as purse for public use.

Wardha, 30-11-'49 K. G. MASHRUWALA

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THE POWER OF PRAYER

All the Scriptures have laid importance on Prayer. It is the medium for the Divine Grace to descend and transform the individual. Can Divine Bliss descend into this hatred-and war-torn world? Yes, it can, provided the approach is pure and steady. God Himself being Peace and Truth, the realization of the two qualities completes the process of attaining Godhead. The sanction to attain Him must come from Him and Him alone, and this is the test for each individual: man seeking Unity with God must seek unity with every being. Prayer alone can achieve this. The function of Prayer is to lead the devotee 'from the Unreal to the Real — from Darkness to Light — from Death to Immortality.' Longfellow said, 'Judge not the Lord by feeble sense, but Trust Him for His Grace.'

No nation or community worth the name exists in this world which does not offer some kind of prayer to the Divine Father, be He called by the name, Lord, Jove, Jehovah, Shiva, Allah, Narayana, Vishnu, Shri Krishna, or Deus. Prayer is the first breath of Life Divine. It is the pulse of the struggling soul and its result is a quiet mind of untroubled thoughts. Prayer is the greatest solace of the afflicted and the suffering.

It is this special power of offering prayer and holding communion with the Lord as well as the power of reasoning that distinguishes human from the rest of the creation. Prayer may be offered with various objects and all forms of prayer are efficacious when offered by sincere and penitent hearts. Every person feels himself more elevated and purified after offering prayer than before it. Man in his Evolution has to pass through various stages of existence, attaining more and more spiritual upliftment and ever developing the divinity in him to higher and higher degree of perfection.

From *Vedic* times we are enjoined to conduct congregational prayers, to meet and talk together for offering a common prayer to the Almighty with a common end and aim. Prayer enables the devotee to stand as firm as a rock in face of greatest temptations and trials. Christ bearing the crucifixion with forgiveness and prayer is a great example. It also protects him miraculously from danger, if the devotee looks to Him alone as his sole refuge. Thus, in the *Mahabharata*, Draupadi, when she was being stripped naked in the open assembly, threw herself entirely into the hands of God, and lo! the wicked Kauravas could not do it, howsoever much they tried to molest her. Again the immortal Prahlada, son of King Hiranyakasipu, by his strong faith in God, stood firm against the most cruel tortures. He never yielded, be it a snake-pit, or deep waters, or a hurl down from a mountain-peak. This is surely the power of prayer.

In recent times we had a galaxy of saints, who have performed miracles by the power of their ardent prayer and, in our own times, Mahatma Gandhi has amply demonstrated the power of prayer. He not only stood unbent against personal danger but also brought about peace and friendliness, where there was killing and hatred just a few days before. Has not the Almighty answered Gandhiji's prayer and delivered mother India from bondage? The power of prayer is infinite and indescribable, unique, and it must be felt to be known and it is the song of breath. The power of prayer alone would save mankind, save nations from war and its ghastly aftermath. It only can change the hearts of men everywhere, make nations come together, without fear, suspicion, or jealousy, and understand that all of them are children of God, whatever their race, colour, sex or country. No nation is superior and particularly nearer to God, and that peoples of the world are essentially one and the same, that all should love and respect one another, work together, live together and attain the common good together. By prayer and its power alone can the evils and the contradictory problems of the world today be solved, and no power other than this, no intelligence or invention of man, can save the world. The knowing of all the atomic secrets will not solve the riddles of this world but the supreme power of prayer can establish Universal Brotherhood of Man, bring about harmony in human society and establish the Kingdom of God upon the Earth, making it like Heaven. Then alone man's task will be fulfilled and his mission in life made complete.

K. RAGHAVACHARIA

QUESTION BOX

Democracy and Constructive Workers

Q. In the context of the present economic programme of the government, can there be any large-scale development of *khadi*?

A. The Government is like milk from a dairy, that is neither too good nor too bad. Milk from a single cow, if the animal is of a high-class breed, is superior to, and, if it is of a lower class, inferior to that of a dairy. Democracy is like dairy milk, while monarchy is like a single cow's milk. A democratic government is representative of the sum-total of its people's development.

Hence, those who have thought about *khadi* and have worked for it have to demonstrate that *khadi* can become universal. Then the Government will take it up. The Government cannot close down the mills today and think of popularizing *khadi*, because public opinion is not in favour of it. In your province, the Prakasham Ministry drew up a scheme to curtail the mills and give encouragement to *khadi*, but the ministry fell. There might have been other reasons for its fall, but this was also one of the reasons. This shows that public opinion in Madras was not favourable.

In Malabar even cotton does not grow and, therefore, only five or ten thousand out of the one crore of Malayalees can wear *khadi* out of the yarn that is being spun here now. If the government declares tomorrow that the people in South Malabar should wear only *khadi* and mill-cloth will not be made available to them, then the people would revolt and protest that the government was going wrong. Therefore, we must create a favourable public opinion. If the people demand, the government will certainly do it. I do not think that Pandit Jawaharlal's government does not want *khadi*. Shri Rajagopalachari has himself done *khadi* work, and perhaps he spins even to this day. I know that he is sorry that people do not spin and do not wear *khadi*. But he cannot immediately stop the mills and make the country *khadi*-clothed. What I wish to impress upon you is that even a good reform cannot be forced on the people. Therefore, it is our duty to create public opinion favourable to it.

Your government has passed the Prohibition Act, but you do not carry on any propaganda for its success. If this indolence continues, prohibition may fail. The government is incurring a heavy loss on its account, with the result that the Central Government has instructed the Madras Government to go slow with this scheme. The implication is that if the Madras Government experienced financial difficulties, the Centre would not come to its help. Even then the Madras Government has brought about complete prohibition within three years. But we do not show now the same enthusiasm for this programme as we did before, when we were fighting the British rule. Then we used to evince much enthusiasm and say, 'This government rules by making the people drunk'. But Gandhiji wanted prohibition not for making a political stunt out of it but for raising the moral level of the country. In his view, it was a moral movement. That is why in the Gandhi-Irwin Pact, though Salt *Satyagraha* was withdrawn, the right of peacefully picketing liquor shops was insisted upon.

I wish to ask you why we do not now conduct a propaganda against drink. The reason is that after the attainment of Independence, our enthusiasm has waned. We have begun to feel that the period of work is over, now it is time for enjoyment.

Let me give another example. The Madras Government has passed the Temple Entry Act. There is also a law that hotels should admit the Harijans. But I know that there are many villages where the Harijans are unable to enter either the temples or hotels. If they do so, they are socially boycotted. If *we* do not propagate against untouchability and convert the minds of these people, what more help can the government render after passing appropriate laws? It cannot convert people's minds. I must say that if this state of affairs continues and our orthodox views exist as they are, it might well happen at the next elections that a new government might repeal the Temple Entry Act.

Take the case of the Central Provinces. The government there banned the polishing of rice. But the people have resorted to polishing it at home. What can the government do to them? Well may it say that instead of polishing the rice in every house, it is better that it is polished in mills. Really it is the duty of C. P. workers to go to each and every house and propagate for unpolished rice. If workers do so, they would help the government and their prestige would be enhanced. Then the government also will regard our words seriously. If today we ask the government, it will say: 'We banned the polishing of rice, and passed Prohibition and Temple Entry Acts, but you have not done anything to propagate these reforms; how then can we rely on you to propagate *khadi*?'

I do not mean to say that all that the government does today is good. But I can say that we have sent the best of our men in the government. As the machinery is old, they are unable to do all good things they want to. Even then, if we co-operate with the government in the good work that is being done, both the government and ourselves together can achieve much.

Constructive Work and Power

Q. Why does not the government utilize the services of the constructive workers in spreading the constructive programme?

A. The respective spheres of work of the officials and the constructive workers are different from each other. If the government appoints you in the places of officials, your moral power will be lowered. Moreover, to fill your original places some other workers will have to be found. What workers can do officials cannot, and what the officials can, we cannot do. Our government can help us in our work, but to conduct propaganda and create public opinion is our duty. This we do not do, but simply go on criticizing the government. Again, government appoints officials on certain merits. If we wish to appoint a worker to take the place of a Collector, he must be one capable of doing Collector's job. After all, what can officials do? If we believe that we can do social service and create public opinion by entering places of power, it is merely an illusion.

VINOBA

At the Village Workers' Camp
in Kalapatti,
Palghat, South Malabar
(*Translated from Hindi*)

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NOTES

Please Note:

The *Harijan* often publishes notices, appeals, etc. of a few approved institutions. Their addresses are always given therewith. So correspondents should address their communications directly to them. Remittances should also be sent to them. If they are addressed to the Navajivan or Harijan office, Ahmedabad, or to me at Wardha, it leads to multiplication of work, waste of time and energy, delay, possible misplacement or loss of letters, unnecessary burden on registering and accounting clerks and peons and their note-books, additional work to postmen, also extra postal and stationery expenses. At times I receive letters meant for another institution. They are forwarded to the latter. If they are not replied to by it, the correspondents write to me again complaining want of reply! How can I help it? The correspondents should also remember that I and some of our institutions do not have any regular peons to do delivery work; and so members of the writing staff have to be entrusted with this work. This can be done only at the cost of their regular work.

We complain and often invent anecdotes of delays of red tape and cost of administration; let us realize how we ourselves contribute to both by multiplying work.

Students and Census

Shri R. Sankaran of the Hindustani Talimi Sangh writes:

> "The time is approaching when preparations will be made for taking the census of our country. In the villages the pupils and teachers may be able to give an annual census. In towns, some elaborate arrangements will be necessary as all High Schools in the locality have to be co-ordinated. The University students and teachers may be entrusted with the task of collecting all statistical data and generally supervising the census operations. This will be real social studies and will make our rising generation society-conscious. This result cannot be achieved by any amount of lectures, text-books or teaching. I am not mentioning about the economy — which is sure to accrue — as it will side-track the discussion from the field of pure education to economics and finance."

I believe it is usual to enrol school teachers in census work. Here it is made for its educative value, and with a view to associate pupils in it. Such practical outdoor work will be of greater help than studies within the four walls of a class-room, in understanding social science and in developing a social outlook in the younger generation. Of course, responsible work relating to the census will have to be done by elderly people, but even children might be able to render some assistance, if properly organized. The economical aspect is not unworthy of consideration.

Wardha, 6-12-'49 K. G. M.

"Above All Nations — Man"

On August 6th and 9th, 1945, the first two atom bombs were released over Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Japanese war-lords surrendered. The most amazing thing is the reaction of the survivors of these awful crimes. Led first by the Mayor of Hiroshima and followed by the Mayor of Nagasaki, the survivors of these striken towns have dedicated their cities to world peace, and with great magnanimity and charity they have forgiven and thus put to shame the war criminals of the victorious countries and declared that they would make their suffering a sacrifice for world peace and understanding. The public park in Hiroshima has been set aside for world peace centre. Each year "no more war demonstrations" have been held until in 1949 the common people of the world have begun to unite with those of Japan.

The Mayor of Hiroshima writes:

> "Ever since the day of that great tragedy in 1945 when the new age atomic energy was first ushered into this world, we people of Hiroshima have been deliberating on how we are to devote ourselves to preventing future wars. We have been doing all that is in our power to attain this end.
>
> "In May this year our national Diet at its fifth session unanimously passed the precedent-making bill calling for the construction of the peace-commemorating city of Hiroshima, and on July 7th when the plebiscite was held here on the bill, it was again enthusiastically approved by an overwhelming majoiity of the citizens, thus enabling it to be promulgated on the very day of our peace festival. It is thus with renewed vigour that we are firmly resolved to apply our constant effort to the creation of the city of Hiroshima as the symbol of world peace, perfect both in material as well as spiritual aspect."

World Peace Day was observed in 28 countries. Perhaps the most dramatic ceremony was in Berlin, where, after an open-air meeting in the public park, a large bronze bowl was unveiled. It bore the inscription "Above all nations — Man." An eternal peace flame was kindled in the bowl, which the city of Berlin will keep burning.

(*The War Resister*, No. 56)

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Printed and Published by Jivanji Dahyabhai Desai, Navajivan Press, Kalupur, Ahmedabad.
Subscription Rates — Inland: One year, Rs. 6; Six months, Rs. 3; Foreign: One year, Rs. 8, 14 s. or $ 2